UNDER THE ASCOTS

SLAM
THWUMP

ARGUS!

MY MOTHER. MY MOTHER TOLD ME!

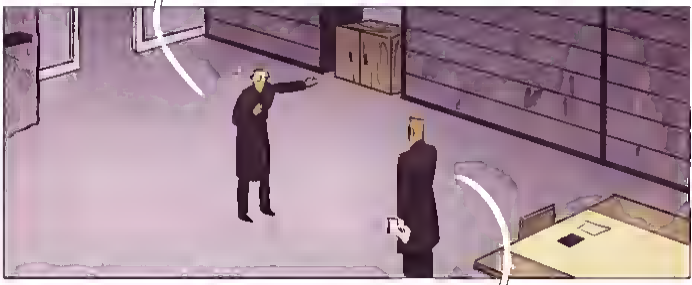
ARGUS. WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME SOMETHING WAS WRONG?

CYRUS, I
WHAT DID SHE SAY?

I'M HER ASSISTANT!

I HAVE TO HELP HER PREPARE A MEETING BETWEEN ALL THE WORLD LEADERS SO THAT SHE CAN INFORM THEM OF THE WIELDERS' DISAPPEARANCE

ARGUS, *WHY* DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?

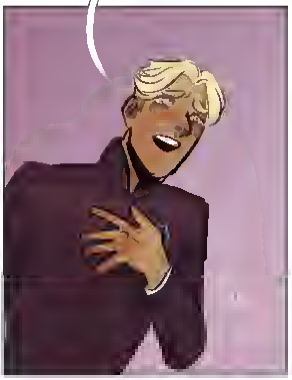


I DIDN'T WANT TO PUT THE WIELDERS IN DANGER, OR YOU, CYRUS--

I KNOW YOU CAN'T TELL ME *EVERYTHING!*

BUT YOU COULD HAVE AT *LEAST* MENTIONED THIS!

DAMNIT, ARGUS, I CARE ABOUT MATTIE AND I CARE ABOUT YOU. STOP PUSHING AWAY MY CONCERN LIKE IT'S *NOTHING*.



I'M SORRY. I SHOULDN'T HAVE-- I JUST...

I KNOW YOU TRY TO PROTECT ME TOO. BUT I CAN'T BEAR TO SEE YOU SO STRESSED ALL THE TIME.

NO. YOU'RE RIGHT. I SHOULDN'T HAVE WAITED THIS LONG TO SAY SOMETHING.

ARGUS. MATTIE'S SAFETY, AND THE WIELDERS' SAFETY IS A PRIORITY. BUT SO ARE YOU.

THEY'RE ADULTS AND THEY'RE SMART. BOTH YOU AND MY MOTHER THINK OF THEM AS DEFENCELESS CHILDREN.

BUT HAVEN'T THEY PROVEN CAPABLE OF TAKING CARE OF THEMSELVES?

AND IF YOU FALL APART, WHAT GOOD WILL IT DO THEM?

SWAP

DINNER. YOU'RE WELCOME.

WEREN'T YOU A BUTCHER'S BOY A HUNDRED YEARS AGO? PREP THIS ONE UP.
IF YOU CAN REMEMBER HOW.

I REMEMBER.

MAAAN THAT SMELLS GOOD!
IS IT ALMOST READY?

YOU'LL GET FEATHERS EVERYWHERE, GAWAIN
GO AWAY.

GUYS, ARE YOU SURE I CAN'T HELP YOU WITH-?

YOU TOO. *OUT!*
okay

ARGUS, THIS BREAD IS SO SOFT, THANKS FOR BRINGIN' IT!
THIS TASTES GREAT! I'VE NEVER HAD RABBIT BEFORE.
THERE'LL BE MORE WHERE THAT CAME FROM
SO, ARGUS, WHAT'S GOING ON IN BASILEIA?

WELL, THINGS ARE QUIET.

NO ONE KNOWS WHAT'S HAPPENED YET. BUT THAT'LL CHANGE SOON. ALLURA IS GOING TO INFORM ALL OF THE LEADERS.

WE SHOULD PREPARE OURSELVES. WHAT DO YOU THINK OF RETURNING TO THE DESERT?

I BELIEVE WE CAN USE THIS CALM TO OUR ADVANTAGE, AND PLAN ON LOCATING THE GHATIKAN WIELDER.

MMPH! YEAH!
WE CAN SPLIT UP. NEN AND DOR CAN HOLD THE FORT WHILE WE TRACK THE WIELDER DOWN!

WE COULD MAKE SOME HEADWAY WITH THE INVESTIGATION. TRY AND FIND OUT WHO THE ASSASSINS ARE

MAYBE GET SOME LEADS ON WHERE THEY HAVE THE GHATIKAN WEAPON.

I GOT A HOLD OF DEIVOS' LAST KNOWN RESIDENCE IN BASILEIA, I COULD GO THERE FOR STARTERS.

BUT I'M NOT CONVINCED YOU SHOULD SPLIT UP. ALTHOUGH TRANSPORT FOR EVERYONE WILL BE HARD TO OBTAIN...

AND I KNOW NEN AND DORIAN WILL HAVE TROUBLE IN DESERT CONDITIONS--

--EVEN IF WE HAVE TO SPLIT UP AND GET THERE ON FOOT, I SAY WE GO

I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA ANY MORE THAN YOU DO, UNCLE ARGUS... BUT WE'LL BE FINDING THE GHATIKAN *AND* INVESTIGATING THE ASSASSINS.

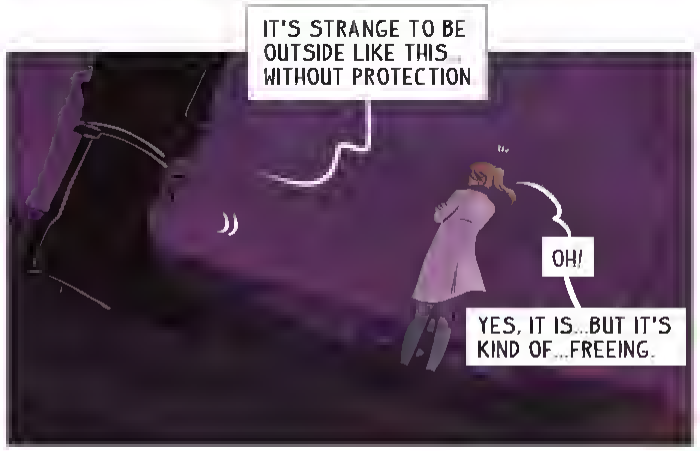
ALRIGHT. I'LL GET A HOLD OF A VEHICLE, AND WE'LL DO THIS. ONCE WE'VE PLANNED IT ALL OUT IN AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE.

WE'LL WASH UP!
YOU MEAN *I'LL* WASH UP_ AND YOU'LL "SUPERVISE" YOU LAZY GOOD FOR NOTHING--
CYRUS DOESN'T KNOW THAT I COME HERE, AND HE'LL BE HOME FROM WORK SOON I NEED TO GO
THANK YOU FOR DINNER, IT WAS DELICIOUS
YOU'RE WELCOME I'M SO GLAD YOU CAME OVER

BE CAREFUL OUT THERE.

Sigh.

Wash
ain


IT'S STRANGE TO BE OUTSIDE LIKE THIS... WITHOUT PROTECTION
OH!
YES, IT IS...BUT IT'S KIND OF...FREEING.

MATTIE, I...I HAVE TO TELL YOU SOMETHING.
WHEN I WAS... NEWLY REBORN, I KILLED THIRTY PEOPLE IN JUST ONE NIGHT.

MY CREATOR, THE MISTRESS OF GOLGOTHA, WAS TEACHING ME TO FEED OFF PRISONERS.

...BUT I WAS ALMOST MAD WITH GRIEF AT THE TIME. I HAD LOST EVERYTHING I'D EVER KNOWN AND IN ITS PLACE I WAS FILLED WITH RAGE AND FEAR AND... AND THIRST. SUCH THIRST.

ALL I REMEMBER IS MY VISION COLOURING RED AND THE SMELL OF FRESH BLOOD.

DECIDED TO WAKE UP DID YOU BOY?
YOU THINK YOU CAN GO BACK HOME LIKE *THIS*?
YOU ARE *NOT* A BASILEIAN ANYMORE GET THAT THROUGH YOUR THICK SKULL BEFORE I REGRET EVER TAKING YOU IN

IT WAS THE FIRST AND LAST TIME I GAVE INTO THE BLOODLUST

I LATER DISCOVERED THAT IT HAPPENS OFTEN WITH NEWBORNS

BUT IT CAN ALWAYS HAPPEN AGAIN AND I WON'T ALWAYS BE ABLE TO CONTROL MYSELF

DO YOU UNDERSTAND NOW?

DORIAN... YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THAT HAPPENING... NOT WITH US

--AND IT DOESN'T CHANGE ANYTHING! WHO YOU ARE DOESN'T SCARE ME...

THE OTHER NIGHT, I...I TOLD YOU HOW I FELT...AND I'M CERTAIN IT'S NOT JUST A...A *PHASE* OR THAT I'M TOO *YOUNG*

BUT--BUT... IF YOU'RE TELLING ME THAT YOU DON'T FEEL THE SAME WAY... THEN I GUESS I CAN UNDERSTAND THAT
MATTIE, IF ONLY YOU KNEW...

SOMETIMES I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH MYSELF BECAUSE...I WANT YOU SO MUCH, IT FRIGHTENS ME...
Y--YOU OH

--AND I CAN'T HELP THINKING THAT THIS SHOULD FEEL WRONG, OR DANGEROUS, BUT...I WANT TO BE WITH YOU.

AND I'VE...I'VE BEEN IN LOVE WITH YOU FOR SO LONG--

D--DORIAN...ME TOO, I--I WANT TO BE WITH YOU TOO.

IS THIS...ALRIGHT?
IS IT ALRIGHT IF I NEVER LET YOU GO?

I...I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS EVEN HAPPENING

ARE WE...GOING TO SAY ANYTHING THE OTHERS?

I SUPPOSE WE SHOULD. WE'LL THINK OF SOMETHING.

...MATTIE?

...YES?